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Diana T Fritz 08/26/2006 04:52:19 PM From DB/Inbox: Search Results

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UNCLAS ABU DHABI 03024

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ACTION: PAO
INFO: ECON POL AMB DCM

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CHARGE: PROG

APPROVED: PAO:WROBERTSON
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ABU DHABI 003024

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA/ARP; NEA/PPD; NEA/RA; INR/R/MR; PA; INR/NESA; INR/B;
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WHITE HOUSE FOR PRESS OFFICE; NSC
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SUBJECT: SPECIAL MEDIA REACTION: CRISIS IN LEBANON

1. Summary: The Arabic-language media remained critical of the U.S. position on the current conflict in Lebanon. In "Al-Khaleej," three editorials criticize Rice's visit and question U.S. motives in the ongoing crisis. An article in "Akhbar Al-Arab" describes Rice's visit to Lebanon as a consolation prize for Lebanon. Finally, an editorial in "Al-Bayan" describes Rice's visit to Lebanon as useless, as she did not focus on the need for an immediate cease fire. End Summary.

2. Under the headline "Hello Lebanon", the Sharjah-based Arabic-language daily "Al-Khaleej" (circulation 90,000) published the following on 07/25 in an unsigned front-page editorial:

"... What did Condoleezza Rice bring to the Lebanese government, torn and heart-broke as they are by this Nazi-style aggression? What did she bring to the wounded and to those Lebanese politicians shocked by the insanity of this war, at a time when they cannot even count the number of their martyrs, while a third of them are displaced, their towns destroyed and their native soil desecrated? Did she offer them boats to evacuate to Cyprus while the Israeli attacks continue, because, in her opinion, they require more time? Perhaps there is still a wall in a house somewhere that has not yet been destroyed, a bridge that is not demolished or a convoy carrying displaced people that has not yet been bombed."

3. Under the headline "End the law of the jungle", the Sharjah-based

Arabic-language daily "Al-Khaleej" published the following in a 07/25 editorial:

"This is the beginning of efforts to create more balance, end double-standard policies and stop the practice of supporting the killer and condemning the victim in regards to aggression against Arabs... If one wanted to implement Resolution 1559 through the massacres committed by Israel over the past 14 days, one should first implement all of the prior resolutions concerning Palestine, Lebanon and all the other countries in this region. Once this happens, someone might then believe that there is genuine concern about international legitimacy and international resolutions... Why are these forces not sent to Palestine, to Gaza and the West Bank, to protect the Palestinian people from murder and destruction? ...End the law of the jungle first. Then the world can live in peace and harmony."

14. Under the headline "Rice, rewards and the new Middle East", Lebanese columnist Saad Mehio wrote the following in a 07/25 editorial in the Sharjah-based Arabic-language daily "Al-Khaleej":

"Rice's statement was no coincidence. Rather it was a product of the diplomacy of war waged by Israel in Lebanon and Palestine. This war has two goals: to regain the dignity of the Israeli army and to change the distribution of power, and perhaps the maps, of the Levant... To put it plainly, the U.S. has exported its crisis in Iraq to the other countries in the region. Instead of being blackmailed by Iran and Syrian because of Iraq, the U.S. has launched a counter-attack on Lebanon and Palestine. Indeed, the U.S. does not just blackmail these countries, but threatens them too. Will these threats make it easy for Washington to 'cool things down' in Iraq, so they can regain control? "

15. Under the headline "Condolences to Lebanon, Support to Israel", the Abu Dhabi-based Arabic-language daily "Akhbar Al-Arab" (circulation 20,000) published the following in a 07/25 unsigned editorial:

"Condoleezza Rice echoed George Bush in her statements upon arriving in the region: 'The Israeli military operations must continue to encourage Lebanon to put pressure on Hezbollah to return the abducted Israeli soldiers.' But it seems now that the objective of this Israeli aggression is far more than just returning the soldiers. Condi has spoken of the birth of a new Middle East, and in her eyes, Lebanon is nothing more than one of the labor pains of that birth."

16. Under the headline "They hear no voice but Israel's", the Dubai-based Arabic-language daily "Al-Bayan" (circulation 85,000) published the following in a 07/25 editorial:

"The Austrian newspaper 'Die Presse' has recently confirmed the world's suspicions that in seeking peace and security, the United States only listens to Israel. U.S. officials never give independent statements on Israeli actions. And as the publication noted, the new Middle East which Secretary Rice has talked about will actually be a monster more difficult to control. It added that in the past, U.S. Secretaries of State have tried to resolve Middle East crises by building dialogue with both friendly and hostile countries. But today the U.S. and Israel do not hesitate to threaten those countries involved in the conflict between Lebanon and Syria, and refuse to negotiate with them... The United States is supporting Israel not just by refusing the cease-fire, but also by participating in the aggression against Lebanon. This is what the New York Times disclosed in reporting the U.S.'s expedited delivery of smart bombs to Israel. Such bombs can destroy bunkers, and their first target is no doubt Hassan Nasrallah. In sum, we are not optimistic about Condi's trip to the region. It is not useful, and cannot possibly produce a cease-fire."

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